

tion of information, undertaking research work, conducting surveys, implementing training and awareness generation programmes, etc. These Centres will link up with Women's Studies Centres and other research and academic institutions through suitable information networking systems.

- 3.26 Institutional mechanisms which exist at the Central and State levels, to promote the advancement of women, will be strengthened. These will be through interventions as may be appropriate and will relate to, among others, provision of adequate resources, staff training and advocacy skills to effectively influence macro-policies, legislations, programmes etc. to achieve the empowerment of women.

Statement-II

Proposed Rural Women's Development & Empowerment Project

1. *Nature of Project :* Central Plan
2. *Coverage*

State	No. of Districts	No. of SHGs (Self Help Groups)
Bihar	3	600
Gujarat	4	1,200
Haryana	3	600
Karnataka	4	1,200
Madhya Pradesh	6	1,000
Uttar Pradesh	15	2,800
	35	7,400

3. *Project Period:* 5 Years.
4. *Project Cost :* Rs. 186.21 crores.
5. *Likely External Assistance*

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)...SDRs 13.3 Million or about US \$ 18.87 million**

International Development Association (IDA)... SDRs 13.5 Million or about US \$ 19.16 Million**

** AT presumptive current rate of exchange of 1 SDR= 1.4189 US \$

6. Expected benefits

- (i) Creation of about 7400 women's SGHs and strengthening their ability to control their own affairs and further their own development;
- (ii) Increased self-esteem, confidence and self-reliance of women to address the constraints which the society imposes on them;
- (iii) Improved management and technical skills for women;

- (iv) Enhanced involvement of women in economic activities and increased incomes controlled by women, leading to increased household inputs and poverty reduction;
- (v) Improvement in women's social status in the family and the community;
- (vi) Increased ability to mobilize various public and private sector services for women's benefit;
- (vii) Integration of women into the mainstream delivery mechanisms for credit;
- (viii) Improvement in women's well-being through improved condition of living and drudgery reduction; and
- (ix) Strengthening of key support agencies, enabling them to be more effective in addressing women's needs.

7. Present position

The Project proposal has been approved by the IFAD Board on 5.12.1996; the IDA Board is likely to consider it during March, 1997. The case is separately being processed for approval from the appropriate agencies in the Government of India.

World Bank Assistance

*139. SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any proposals from Tamil Nadu Government or many other State Government are pending with Union Government for getting World Bank assistance to set up hospitals;

(b) if so, the stage at which these proposals are pending;

(c) whether any World Bank officials visited the State and made a feasibility report about these projects; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) to (d) Proposals have been received from States including the Tamil Nadu Government for securing World Bank assistance for upgradation of health facilities at the secondary level including district hospitals. The World Bank has already sanctioned in 2 phases, State Health Systems Development Projects for Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, West Bengal and Punjab and these are currently under implementation. Under Phase III, it is proposed to cover a few more States for which projects are being formulated by the State Govts. in accordance with guidelines of the World Bank.

The State Projects are developed through detailed discussions with the World Bank and past experience has shown that they take anywhere from 12 to 24 months to fructify, depending on the time taken on the design and formulation of the project by the State.

As per our record, no World Bank team has officially visited Tamil Nadu to make a feasibility report in connection with the State Health Systems Development Project.

Asthma

*140. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT:
SHRI PARASRAM BHARDWAJ :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have conducted any survey or study of children suffering from Asthma due to polluted air in the country particularly in Metropolitan areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) to (c) Government have not conducted any survey on the State-wise prevalence of asthma in children. However, the preliminary findings of some studies conducted in Delhi reveal a higher incidence of bronchial asthma among school children. The Indian Council of Medical Research has reported that there is no direct evidence to suggest that air pollution itself can be the cause of asthma. Allergies like pollen, house dust and certain food articles can also trigger off asthma attacks.

Apart from providing health education and treatment facilities for the disease, the Government have launched several measures to control pollution.

Dignity of National Flag

1290. SHRI PARASRAM BHARDWAJ:
SHRI CHHITUBHAI GAMIT:
SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Tricolour was upside down when the Prime Minister was signing agreement with Israeli President Ezer Weizman on December 30, 1996;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure that such lapses do not recur in future?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) It was a lapse that the National Tricolour was not in the correct position. Those concerned have been instructed to ensure that such a lapse does not recur in the future.

MIG-29 Fighter Aircraft

1291. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether MIG-29 fighter aircraft has set up one of the best safety records in the world;

(b) if so, the details regarding its performances;

(c) whether the Government requires more of this fighter-cum-trainer jets; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) to (d) Mig-29 is an air superiority/air defence fighter aircraft with a good safety record. It is an agile and highly manoeuvrable aircraft capable of supersonic speed at low level and carrying long range as well as short range combat missiles. There is no requirement, according to the existing approved unit establishment, of either the fighter or trainer version of this aircraft at present.

Killing of Fishermen

1292. SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian fishermen shot dead by Sri Lankan Navy during past twelve months; and

(b) the response of Indian Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) Twenty incidents of shooting at Indian fishing vessels in the Palk Straits, resulting in the death of eleven fishermen, have been reported to the Government during the last twelve months. Each incident was taken up with the Sri Lankan authorities. They have denied the involvement of their Navy in a large number of reported cases and in some cases, the investigations are still not complete. The Sri Lankan Navy has acknowledged its involvement in three incidents which resulted in the death of our fishermen.

(b) India protested at every incident of violence against its fishermen and has emphasized to the Government of Sri Lanka the need for restraint in dealing with fishermen.

The External Affairs Minister during his recent visit to Sri Lanka (January 19-22, 1997) discussed the problems faced by Indian fishermen with the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister and conveyed our serious concern at the incidents of violence against them. Both sides agreed on the need to take steps to avoid untoward incidents in each others' waters and to address the problems faced by the fishermen in a spirit of compassion and understanding.

Further discussions on problems faced by the fishermen were held during a visit by a Sri Lankan delegation in February, 1997. Both sides agreed to examine modalities to ensure the safety of fishermen and to deal with cases of fishermen straying across the International Boundary Line.